

**TOWN OF DARIEN
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, JANUARY 5, 2009**

ATTENDANCE: 1st Selectwoman Evonne Klein; David Bayne;
Callie Sullivan; Linda Santarella

STAFF: Karl Kilduff, Administrative Officer

OTHERS: Don Jacobs, D.I. Jacobs Consulting, Inc.; John Van der Kieft, RTM

CALL TO ORDER

1st Selectwoman Klein called the Regular Meeting to order at 8:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1st Selectwoman Klein stated that the public be given the opportunity to express their views and concerns, and be afforded time to ask questions.

PRESENTATION from Don Jacobs, Consultant on Social Services Department

Don Jacobs, shared his report as follows:

Mr. Jacobs presented his findings on the study conducted on the Town's Social Services Department. His final report is dated December 1, 2008. The report specifically pertains to staffing levels within the Social Services Department. The consultants' findings and recommendations were covered in great detail.

The goal and purpose of the study is to enable the Town to have a clearer understanding of what the department is today and where improvements can be made as relates to staffing, efficiency and its effect on the community at large. These findings were based on numerous on-site visits, interviews with personnel within the Town administration, and visits with members of local social service agencies that interact with the Town's Social Services department. They provided input, recommendations and data. Initially the consultant met with the Administrative Officer to review the goals and objectives of the study. Budgetary and demographic information was made available to the Consultant by the Town. The Department provided service level contact data for a time frame of one year commencing July 2007 through July 2008. There were approximately 920 requests for information. It is noted that within the data there is most definitely a duplication of certain people seeking multiple services, i.e., inquiring about busing, food and fuel as an example.

The program offers seventeen (17) different types of services.
There are five (5) fundamental areas as follows:

- Information
- Transportation
- Case Management
- Emergency Assistance
- Advocacy.

The information given to callers is superior and well received according to feedback. That being said, the department has a high influx of calls and the providers of information convey care and concern toward the caller. Other agencies have lauded the department for their unique way of communicating. The residents look to the department for answers.

Even though resources are tight, the department staff clearly understands the purpose and presents the information professionally and effectively.

The number one priority is that the Social Services Department be recognized by all social service providers as an information referral service providing the link between the residents and social service agencies. This will ensure a high quality, well functioning department and one that is providing the outreach information that it should for the betterment of the community and its residents.

The part-time administrative position should be increased to a full time position. This will free up the Director's time for community outreach.

In conclusion the department is trying 'to be all things to all people' which is their mission. The Consultant, however, noted that a Vision Statement is lacking. This Vision Statement would describe the ideal social services program. There is clearly a need for additional support staff which is critical. The support staff communicates via the telephone. It was pointed out that one out of twenty residents use the social services department for information on a specific need. The leadership role lies with the Director who needs to spend more time out of the office and go out into the community spreading the word about the department. She needs to articulate the referrals that are available to those with needs.

The Consultant suggested that a name change be considered, i.e., Department of Human Services. To address the elderly population and their needs, a merge with the Senior Center should be considered. This will then dilute the senior center department. The head of leadership profile would then be different since it will oversee multiple areas. Different skills may be necessary.

Mr. Bayne pointed out that the health department wasn't suggested as being merged within the social services department. The social services and the health departments do spend time

interacting on a daily basis. The elderly population is growing within the Town and their needs for food, clothing and health matters are great.

1st Selectwoman Klein mentioned that the Youth Department could be considered to add to the new structure if departments are consolidated. She believes the addition of staff is not the solution.

Mr. Jacobs, the Consultant, pointed out that many communities operate with compressed departments and it is cost effective. Staffing multiple departments with directors and subordinates is costly. Consolidating departments and sharing resources is visionary and should be considered. The right person would have to be hired to oversee this change in operations.

The overall purpose of the study is to have the department function more effectively and efficiently, and in no way is this study aimed at criticizing any employee. It is noted that there is always room for improvement.

1st Selectwoman Klein stated that this report has been very helpful. She asked if there were any further questions or comments.

Mrs. Santarella mentioned that she was not sold on the name change to Human Services Department.

Mr. Jacobs praised Ms. Olive and her staff.

REPORT from David Bayne, Weed Beach Building Committee

Mr. Bayne stated that a report, dated December 10, 2008, has been prepared and the costs associated with the project are as follows:

Entire construction costs / bathhouse has been budgeted at \$3 million.

Allocation for soft costs is \$600,000.

The expected final cost should come in at approximately \$2.9 million.

Additional fees for the architects are \$27,000.

The committee will meet again on January 14.

In addition, the playground committee has the equipment in storage and is ready to be put into place in the spring.

1ST SELECTWOMAN'S REPORT

Thursday, January 8 – Legislative Breakfast

She stated that issues and concerns need to be kept alive. Funding is necessary.

- The Hollow Tree Ridge Road bridge to close this week. This project needs to be done and completed in a timely manner. While the closing is an inconvenience, it is necessary that this work be completed. Work will be monitored and checked daily. A meeting should be scheduled with the new Commissioner. Approval by the DOT to open the bridge is necessary.

- Still awaiting the Flood Study 2006 results.

- Pot holes on the roadways are to be filled and repaired as quickly as possible.

- There has been a slow down on project approvals by the state government.

- Tree removal on private water property has become a growing concern in that homeowners are expecting the town to pay these costs. Homeowners have been contacted and have not reacted. Complaints have been lodged by neighbors. In certain instances a felled tree has created flooding. Below are estimated costs for tree removal at three locations:

- Tree at 19 Lynn Court -	\$1500
- Two trees at Stony Brook	\$4200
- Removal of tree behind Stony Brook at Hecker Avenue	\$8500

1st Selectwoman Klein expressed surprise that homeowners expect the Town to cover the cost of their tree removal. She reported that there is no budget for this type of service.

Mr. Kilduff reported on downed trees in need of removal and there is a need to cap out liability for private properties. If a 'town' tree is down, then the town incurs the cost. He stated that there is no easy resolution. And there are currently no codes. A letter should be sent to the Homeowner at time the occurrence is realized.

Mrs. Santarella believes that the homeowner should bear this responsibility.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Mr. Kilduff said that the DEP and EPA funding run through the Clean Water Fund.

He emphasized that there should be no duplication of lists or requests.

There is slowness in reviewing stimulus and non-stimulus projects and in some instances it is taking years to address.

Currently there is a Hurricane Protection grant request.

The town's pending projects are not wish list projects. They have met government standards. All requests submitted have been analyzed and deemed necessary.

1st Selectwomen Klein stated that Weed Beach is included in letter to Israel & Shays.

NEW BUSINESS

a) **DISCUSS DRAFT AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLAN.**

A final revised draft was prepared on December 30, 2008 by the Planning and Zoning Department.

Public Speaker, John Van der Kieft, Chairman of the Planning and Zoning Committee commented that "how the Plan evolves is related to the Budget". More input is needed from the Committee. He said he would speak with Fred.

Mr. Bayne thought the plan was well prepared. He pointed out that a two-page Executive Summary should be included.

Mr. Bayne mentioned that Mr. Morton wants to see a timeline as a reference on pages 23-24. The timeline concept was well received.

1st Selectwoman Klein highlighted that the Plan spans five years and that the progress needs to be gauged to realize results. She pointed out that more detail is needed. She relayed her thought that if she should move into a particular neighborhood, would she be required to pay more? Responsibilities need to be defined by Statute.

Mrs. Santarella said that the proposed 19 units should be played down. Perhaps it should be a footnote. This number is not 'set in stone' and is subject to change. The public needs to know this information.

She also voiced to take out the sentence on page 13 below the chart and second sentence – *According to the November 20, 2008 Darien News-Review, the three- and four-bedroom units could generate 24 points. These are estimates based upon one likely scenario.*

She mentioned that on Page 15, the Moratorium Q & A does not need to be in the report.

On Page 17, Mrs. Santarella suggested to rename the section **"What If Darien Does Nothing?"** to **"Risk of Doing Nothing"**.

1st Selectwoman Klein said that a “Next Steps” talk is to take place next Monday, January 12. This matter needs to be addressed publicly. This matter is not one of ‘light reading’. It needs expansion.

Mr. Kilduff stated that there is a need to create an overlay zone for affordable housing.

Ms. Sullivan believed the tone of the report was “good urgent”, and not one of panicking.

Mr. Bayne liked the overall strategy. There is leeway for opportunity and change within the Plan.

The Town has been proactive in addressing affordable housing over the past fifty years. Public forums and public participation at meetings has kept the interested parties informed on plans. There is a waiting list in excess of 200 seeking affordable housing in Darien.

1st Selectwoman Klein said that the discussion needs to continue.

b) DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION ON THE RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE FIRST SELECTWOMAN TO EXECUTE AN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANNING GRANT AGREEMENT WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH.

**** MRS. SANTARELLA MOVED TO APPROVE THAT THE FIRST SELECTWOMAN EXECUTE AN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANNING GRANT AGREEMENT WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH.**

**** MR. BAYNE SECONDED.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

c) DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION ON ADJUSTING HEALTH DEPARTMENT PERMIT FEES.

1st Selectwoman Klein said that businesses are impacted by Permits.

Mr. Bayne asked for the rationale for additional fees, and discussion took place.

Mr. Kilduff pointed out that permit fees are impacting businesses.

He spoke of a business with a retail store front and a catering business in the rear of the building. This reflects two different businesses housed at the same location.

**** 1st SELECTWOMAN MOVED TO APPROVE THAT AN ADJUSTMENT NEEDS TO TAKE PLACE ON PERMIT FEES.**

**** MR. BAYNE SECONDED.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

d) TRANSFERS

From:			To:		
<u>Account No.</u>	<u>Account</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Account No.</u>	<u>Account</u>	<u>Amount</u>
10704000-86600	Contingency	\$ 5,600	10102021-81015	Channel 79 Operations	\$13,100
10102021-81003	Salary-Seasonal	7,500			
	TOTAL	<u>\$13,100</u>		TOTAL	<u>\$13,100</u>

**** MRS. SANTARELLA MOVED TO APPROVE THAT THE ABOVE TRANSFER OF APPROPRIATIONS IS APPROVED FOR REFERRAL TO THE BOARD OF FINANCE TOTALING \$13,100.**

**** MR. BAYNE SECONDED.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

AGENDA REVIEW

Thursday, January 8 – 7:30 Audit Meeting

Tony Homicki will present first to avoid any misunderstanding.
Ms. Sullivan felt he will do a good job.

APPOINTMENTS/REAPPOINTMENTS

a) CONSIDER AND TAKE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING APPOINTMENT:

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Debra Hertz (D) re-appointed to a new term on the Commission of Social Services. The new term would run 12/01/2008 – 11/30/2011. Colin Seely (D) as a member (At Large) of the Advisory Commission on Coastal Waters, for the term beginning on 2/16/08 and expiring on 2/15/10.

**** MRS. SANTARELLA MOVED TO APPROVE THE RE-APPOINTMENT OF DEBRA HERTZ (D) TO THE COMMISSION OF SOCIAL SERVICES FOR THE NEW TERM BEGINNING ON 12/01/08 AND EXPIRING ON 11/31/2011.**

**** MR. BAYNE SECONDED.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

b) CONSIDER AND TAKE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING APPOINTMENT:

Reese Hutchinson be appointed to the SWRPA Board

**** MR. BAYNE MOVED TO AMEND THE AGENDA TO ADD THE APPOINTMENT OF REESE HUTCHINSON TO THE SWRPA BOARD**

**** MS. SULLIVAN SECONDED.**

**** MR. BAYNE MOVED TO APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF REESE HUTCHINSON TO THE SWRPA BOARD.**

**** MS. SULLIVAN SECONDED.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Regular Meeting of December 15, 2008

The corrections to the minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 15, 2008 are as follows:

Report from David Knauf

Page 2, *comment by Mr. Bayne* – last sentence, Paragraph 3

He explained information from a provided Map.

Mr. Bayne didn't see a need to list the house addresses on the Map.

Page 2, Third paragraph under Report

Some are not connected and are near the beach.

Correction: Some are connected and are near the beach.

On page 2, second before last paragraph –

She felt that some people were afraid to hook up to the system for the same reason, that it won't work. ADD: The sewer system, is in fact, very reliable. There should be no reason not to hook up to the system.

Page 3 (New Business) (d) Second paragraph, last sentence

He said that there are currently 10 lines available in the Zoning Department and the Board of Appeals, and he is proposing to add another 10 or 12 lines to satisfy real estate brokers.

Delete: *and establish parity and continuity*

Add: ... available in the Zoning Department and Zoning Board of Appeals,

Page 3 (1st Selectwoman's Report) – third sentence

She reminded everyone that this was a huge issue, and a request had been made to start the project during the holiday season.

CHANGE TO:

...*not* to start the project during the holiday season.

Page 4 – First Paragraph, first sentence

1st Selectwoman Klein said that she has received a number of phone calls regarding the Town of Darien's pension fund from residents wanting to confirm that the fund is not being handled through the same firm that Fairfield uses.

CHANGE TO:

...that the fund is not being invested with Bernie Madoff and does not have a fund association with him.

Page 5 – Fifth paragraph – Mr. Fox presented...

Mr. Bayne said that he only wanted to clarify that it was town-owned property that was damaged,

ADD: for which the town is assuming responsibility.

**** MR. BAYNE MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF DECEMBER 15, 2008 AS CORRECTED.**

**** MRS. SANTARELLA SECONDED.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

January 5, 2009	Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting at 8:00 P.M.
January 6, 2009	Planning & Zoning Planning Meeting at 8:00 P.M.
January 7, 2009	Joint Town Department Heads Meeting at 8:30 A.M.
January 12, 2009	Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting at 8:00 P.M.
January 13, 2009	Board of Education Regular Meeting at 7:30 P.M.
January 13, 2009	Planning & Zoning General Meeting at 8:00 P.M.

OTHER BUSINESS

**** 1st SELECTWOMAN KLEIN MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES TO ADD AN ITEM TO THE AGENDA: EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**** MRS. SANTARELLA SECONDED.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** MS. SANTARELLA MOVED TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION.**

**** MR. BAYNE SECONDED.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The Board went into Executive Session at 10:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Hohlweck
Telesco Secretarial Services